



DEPARTMENT OF
GENDER STUDIES



A Discussion with Timothy Gitzen
GENDER STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

SEX ON BASE: PORTRAITS OF A HOMOEROTIC KOREAN SOLDIER

MONDAY, JANUARY 28 | LH 325 | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

ABSTRACT:

My goal is to think through the banality of the military and militarization in South Korea. This banality makes people oblivious to the everyday violences inherent in militarization, from the treatment of trans bodies in the military conscription system to the production of homophobia, misogyny, racism or xenophobia, and ableism. I focus on the ways this banality is disturbed or challenged, arguing that the repetition of images and representations of the soldier as a homoerotic subject—the stories of sex, photographs, fictional stories and illustrations, and even the DIY Twitter porn—disrupt the banality of militarization. However, banality operates through the repetition of images, practices, discourses, and ideologies—signs that embed into people’s lives and minds. Therefore, what is most satisfying about the repetition of these disruptive and even subversive images and representations is that they take the repetition of banality and turn it on its head.

BIOGRAPHY:

Timothy Gitzen is a Korea Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow in the Institute for Korean Studies at Indiana University. He received his PhD in Sociocultural Anthropology from the University of Minnesota. His research focuses on sexuality and security, political violence, and activism in South Korea, parts of which appear in *Transgender Studies Quarterly* and the forthcoming Duke University Press collection *Queer Korea*.